



## CDC's Environmental Health Laboratory

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Environmental Health Laboratory works to prevent disease and birth defects through state-of-the-art laboratory science that measures actual levels of toxic substances in people.

### CDC's environmental health lab prevents disease...

- By measuring exposure to toxic substances that can cause cancer, lung disease, and other illnesses.
- By determining the levels of exposure to toxic substances that cause health problems.
- By screening newborns for treatable inborn diseases, such as sickle cell anemia, hypothyroidism (not enough thyroid hormone), and phenylketonuria (or PKU--a disorder that can result in mental retardation).
- By ensuring accurate measurement of cholesterol and other blood lipids, and thus helping doctors diagnose and treat high cholesterol, a major risk factor for heart disease.



*The CDC lab provides the "gold standard" for tests critical to our health.*



### CDC's environmental health lab saves lives...

- By measuring toxic substances in blood and urine during emergency situations in the U.S. and worldwide. These measurements enable health officials to determine the cause of illness, prioritize medical treatment, and prevent additional disease.

*No other lab in the world can measure chemical exposure in people as quickly and reliably as CDC's environmental lab. The results are used to inform not only those exposed, but also those in decision-making roles.*

### CDC's environmental health lab saves money...

- By improving the ability to assess environmental risks and thus make more informed decisions.
- By developing less expensive technologies to measure exposure.

*Poor environmental decisions are costly.  
Real data on people informs environmental decisions in ways that theoretical risk assessment cannot.*

